

FIELD TRIPS OF THE CLUB

TRIP OF MARCH 22, TO THE PINE BARRENS AT LAKEHURST, VICINITY OF WRANGEL BROOK

Each trip through the Pine Barren Region of southern New Jersey has brought to my attention traces of the successive inroads that civilization has made in exploiting this area.

The first settlers who touched the western edge of the Barrens were the Swedes who came in 1638 to establish trading posts. About this same time the Dutch had received grants in the Cape May Peninsula and had commenced to clear acreage for farms. With the surrender of New Amsterdam in 1664, a large influx of English settlers came from Connecticut and Massachusetts to settle the coast at Tuckerton, Barnegat, and elsewhere.

Before the year 1700 thriving villages along the Delaware and the coast sought communications across the Pine Barrens. An old Indian trail which started from Great Egg Harbor and followed the river northwestward and then to the Delaware was used by the early surveyors and timber cruisers. One of the first routes opened by the whites extended from Barnegat through Cedar Grove and South Pemberton to Burlington on the Delaware.

In those days the Pitch Pine grew to 75 feet in height, while now, chiefly due to repeated fires, it seldom reaches 50 feet. The White Cedar, due to its lightness and durability, was timbered to such an extent in the Cape May section that Benjamin Franklin in his Poor Richard's Almanac in 1749 advocated judicious reforestation. Yet even today white cedar is cut for local consumption.

The damming up of streams to make cranberry bogs materially affected the flora. The natives also found that nurseries were a ready market for dried sphagnum moss to use as packing material.

At one time American Holly was carted away by the crate for Christmas greens as was also Laurel, and Mistletoe. When in bloom Water Lilies, Sweet Bay, Arbutus and the Pink Azalea suffered depredations.

Finally we came to the real estate promoter who slashed out huge developments with avenues and streets, labeling them

with inviting names. But today the Pitch Pine fills the streets, covering up the scars, persisting in spite of the axe, fire and farming.

As the group followed the sand roads, there was ample evidence that the Barrens are still a retreat for wilderness lovers.

Buds of the following were studied: *Clethra alnifolia*, *Nyssa sylvatica*, *Magnolia virginiana*, *Azalea viscosa*, *Rhus vernix*, *Lyonia mariana*, *Vaccinium corymbosum*, *Comptonia asplenifolia*, *Sassafras officinalis*.

In low sandy ground the evergreen clumps of *Xerophyllum asphodeloides* were noted. Where the water table was just below the level of the ground *Kalmia angustifolia* and *Chamaedaphne calyculata* blanketed large meadows. In favorably exposed places the first buds of *Pyxidantha barbulate* showed white. Blueberry buds were swelling; red maples opened to show their stamens and the buds of sweet bay had waxed fat with the lengthening days.

Lichens of the genus *Cladonia* had not reached maturity. *Cladonia papillaria* podetia appeared as whitish dots on the grayish green thallus. *C. verticillata*, *calycantha*, *fimbriata* and a new form of *caroliniana*, probably *prolifera*, were encountered in a cedar swamp. The tar-like patches covering the bare sand everywhere in the Barrens are a lichen, *Lecidea uliginosa*, later covered by sessile apothecia no larger than pinheads.

It seemed hardly possible that in the midst of such perfect isolation we were only 70 miles from New York.

GEORGE F. DILLMANN

FIELD TRIP OF SATURDAY, APRIL 18, TO SITE OF
DR. JOHN TORREY'S HOME, PALISADES, N. Y.

About twenty members of the Torrey Botanical Club enjoyed an unusual field trip on Saturday, April 18, to Palisades, Rockland County, N. Y., to visit the site of the home occupied by Dr. John Torrey, about 1858, above the Palisades cliffs south of Sneden's Landing. This interesting excursion was offered through the hospitality of Mrs. Robert C. Hill, member of the club and active in the Garden Club of America, whose country home, Niederhurst, adjoins the estate of Thomas W. Lamont, which includes "Torrey's Cliff," above which stood

Dr. Torrey's house. Mrs. Hill's kind thought was relayed to the field committee by Miss Margaret McKinney, Secretary of the City Garden Club. Mrs. Hill fixed the date for April 18 because about three acres of "Dutchman's Breeches" *Dicentra Cucullaria*, on her own place and underneath "Torrey's Cliff" would then be in full bloom. So they proved to be, and an astonishing display of this plant they were, on the talus of the cliffs, running south from Niederhurst. None of the members had ever seen such a display of these plants, with their delicately divided leaves, and quaint, cream colored, white, or somewhat pinkish double spurred blossoms. They are protected by the situation, inaccessible from highways, from extermination.

Mrs. Hill persuaded her neighbor, Mr. Lamont, to call his whole estate of about 300 acres, "Torrey's Cliff," as it was known during Dr. Torrey's occupation, which seems to have been about 1850-1860 (?) before the Torrey family moved to Sterling, N. J., in Morris County. Mr. Lamont has Dr. Torrey's early botanical works in his library. Mrs. Hill led the party through her rock garden, where *Erythronium americanum*, *Claytonia virginiana*, and *Dicentra Cucullaria*, *Sanguinaria canadensis*, *Trillium erectum* and *Arisaema triphyllum* were in bloom together with interesting spring flowering exotics, along the cliff path to the great expanse of fully flowering Dutchman's Breeches. The path then climbed into Mr. Lamont's rock garden, near which, on a flat spot overlooking the Hudson, was the site of the house occupied by Dr. Torrey. Mrs. Hill has a photograph of it, which the field committee proposes to reproduce in the 1937 schedule. Thomas W. Lamont, 3rd, Mr. Lamont's grandson, a bright, handsome lad who is interested in natural history, became the leader here and took the party about the grounds above the cliff.

Returning to Mrs. Hill's home, some interesting blooming exotics were viewed, most striking being the Pacific Coast *Erythronium Hendersoni*, with mottled foliage like our eastern *E. americanum*, but with deep purple flowers; also *Scilla sibirica*, obviously well established and happy. Mrs. Hill has some fine trees, including a notable weeping beech. She entertained the party with tea, and a period of botanical talk ended a pleasant afternoon, an event which all concerned hoped may become an annual one in the field schedule.

RAYMOND H. TORREY